

## 6.2 Relationship Between Fecundity and Culture



# From Last Class....

- ◉ Trends from Developed Nations
- ◉ Trends from Developing Nations
- ◉ Birth Rates

# From 6.1 Physical and Environmental Factors and Fertility

- ◉ A couple is considered to be infertile when they have been trying to conceive for over one year without success
- ◉ Estimated that in Canada 1 in 5 couples are infertile

# From 6.1 Physical and Environmental Factors and Fertility

- There seems to be a host of physical and environmental factors linked to infertility
- One of these is the rapid spread of



## From 6.1 Physical and Environmental Factors and Fertility

- ◉ In particular chlamydia which is a symptomless condition which often results in the blockage of the female's fallopian tubes
- ◉ Another factor is

# From 6.1 Physical and Environmental Factors and Fertility

## Low Sperm Count



# From 6.1 Physical and Environmental Factors and Fertility

- The drop in sperm counts has been linked to high levels of estrogen, in

## Water Supplies



## From 6.1 Physical and Environmental Factors and Fertility

- High levels of estrogen are believed to be due to small amounts of women's oral contraceptives finding their way into the water system
- By products of the chemicals also found in some food packaging and plastics



## From 6.1 Physical and Environmental Factors and Fertility

- ◉ Also a growing trend for women to delay motherhood until they get their careers established
- ◉ More than a third of all babies born in Canada are born to women in their thirties

## 6.2 Fertility and Cultural Norms



# Fertility and Cultural Norms

- ◉ Demographers John Bongaarts and Robert Potter studied the **proximate determinants of fertility**
- ◉ Biological, and behavioural factors through which social, economic and environmental variables affect fertility

# Fertility and Cultural Norms

- What they found:

Women on average bear two children



# Fertility and Cultural Norms

- Generally married in their 20's and the first child comes two years later



# Fertility and Cultural Norms

- The second child was spaced approximately two to three years apart



is used to delay the second conception



used to avoid further births

# Fertility and Cultural Norms

- Their work concluded that norms are affected by age at marriage, frequency of intercourse, age of first menstruation, use and effectiveness of contraception.

# Links Between Breast Feeding and Fecundity

- ◉ Many women in Canada only get 6-8 weeks of maternity leave
- ◉ Mothers return to work when infants are quite young and usually stop breast feeding
- ◉ Many studies show that infants benefit greatly from breast milk

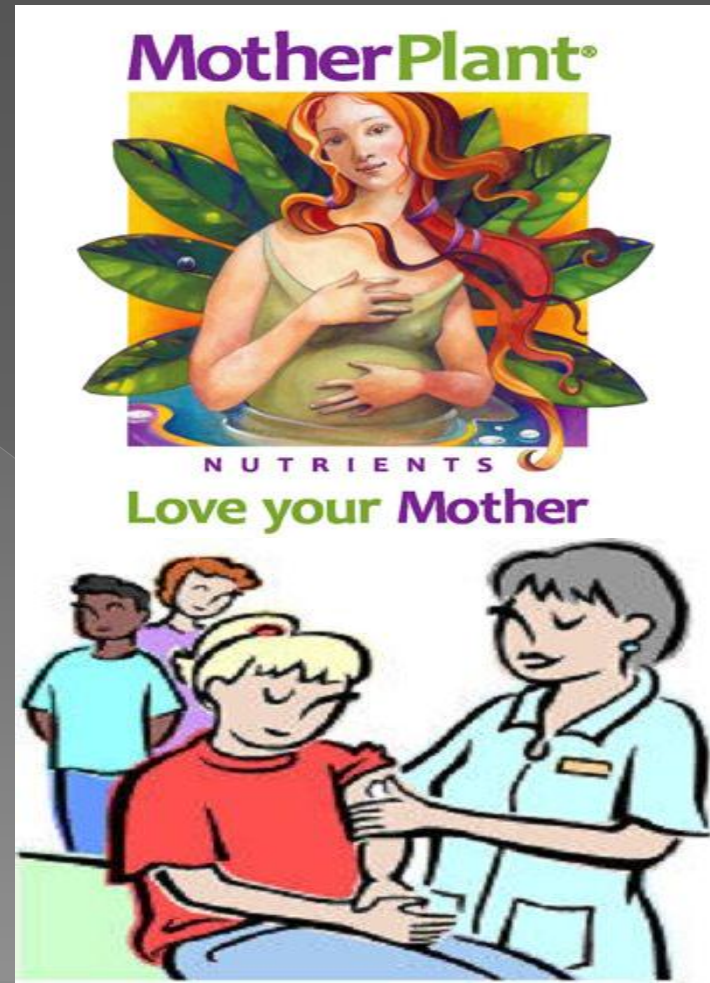


# Links Between Breast Feeding and Fecundity

- It's the only food that is:

Loaded with the nutrients that infants need

Immunizes infants against many diseases



# Links Between Breast Feeding and Fecundity

Improved digestion and  
Optimal growth of the  
Infants body system



# Links Between Breast Feeding and Fecundity

- Breast feeding rates are higher among older mothers and those with higher education and income levels
- One of the most common reasons for women to stop breastfeeding is that they had to return to work

# Links Between Breast Feeding and Fecundity

- ◉ How does breast feeding affect Fecundity?
- ◉ When breast feeding is done on demand, and no supplementary food is given, nursing has a contraceptive effect on the woman
- ◉ Breast feeding results in the release of **prolactin**

# Links Between Breast Feeding and Fecundity

- Prolactin- a hormone that regulates the production of progesterone and inhibits ovulation.

# Menarche and Fecundity

- ◉ First menstrual period
- ◉ Developing and Developed Countries

# Age at Marriage

- ◉ Earlier Marriages, longer fertility years

# Government Intervention in Fertility

- Anthropologists have found cultural norms related to fertility are not only shaped by parents but also by government policies and programs
- They can impose policies and programs to increase or decrease birth rates



# Government Intervention in Fertility

- ◉ EX Russia
- ◉ Low birth rate
- ◉ Debating banning abortions and imposing a childlessness tax

# Government Intervention in Fertility

- ◉ China
- ◉ High birth rate
- ◉ One couple one child policy

# Government Intervention in Fertility

- ◉ Sexual Education in schools
- ◉ Easier access to contraceptives